

## Message Text

SECRET

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42

ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /026 W

----- 125763

R 301020Z JUN 75

FM AMCONSUL LUANDA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3739

INFO AMEMBASSY KINSHASA

AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMEMBASSY LUSAKA

S E C R E T SECTION 1 OF 2 LUANDA 0837

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: XGDS-2

TAGS: PINT MILI AO

SUBJECT: HIGH COMMISSIONER SUPPLIES ARMS TO UNITA

1. SUMMARY. HIGH COMMISSIONER GENERAL ANTONIO DA SILVA CARDOSO TOLD ME ON JUNE 27 THAT HE HAS TRIED WITHOUT A GREAT DEAL OF SUCCESS TO GET WEAPONS INTO THE HANDS OF UNITA. HE DID MANAGE TO TRANSFER A NUMBER OF ARMS, BUT WAS FOUND OUT BY THE MPLA AND HAS NOT MADE ANOTHER ATTEMPT. PRESIDENT KAUNDA OF ZAMBIA AGREED SEVERAL WEEKS AGO TO ACT AS INTERMEDIARY FOR A SHIPMENT FROM PORTUGAL TO ANGOLA FOR UNITA, BUT CHANGED HIS MIND. MPLA HAS SERIOUS INTERNAL PROBLEMS, BUT POSSESSES LARGE QUANTITIES OF WEAPONS AND IS IN MUCH BETTER SHAPE THAN FNLA, THE QUALITY OF WHOSE LEADERSHIP IS ABYSMAL. END SUMMARY.

2. CARDOSO TOLD ME THAT SEVERAL WEEKS AGO HE PROPOSED TO THE PORTUGUESE GOVERNMENT THAT IT SUPPLY ARMS TO UNITA THROUGH ZAMBIA. PRESIDENT KAUNDA AGREED, OR AT LEAST UNITA PRESIDENT JONAS SAVIMBI TOLD CARDOSO THAT KAUNDA HAD AGREED, TO ACT AS MIDDLEMAN. AS CARDOSO RELATED IT, HE PROPOSED TO TRANSFER ABOUT 10,000 RIFLES TO SAVIMBI THROUGH THE ZAMBIAN GOVERNMENT, WHICH WOULD PAY A NOMINAL PRICE IN ORDER TO PROVIDE A COVER. THE WEAPONS WOULD THEN BE SMUGGLED INTO EASTERN ANGOLA, WHERE UNITA HAS THOUSANDS OF RECRUITS IN TRAINING. FOREIGN MINISTER MELO ANTUES AGREED TO THE PROPOSAL, AS DID PRESIDENT COSTA

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GOMEZ. WHEN KAUNDA ARRIVED IN LISBON AFTER HIS CARIBBEAN VISIT,

HOWEVER, HE TOLD THE PORTUGUESE HE WOULD NOT GO THROUGH WITH IT.

3. CARDOSO THEN TURNED TO OTHER MEANS TO GIVE SAVIMBI THE ARMS HE NEEDS TO BECOME A RESPECTED FORCE. ABOUT TWO WEEKS AGO HE SECRETLY GAVE SAVIMBI 1,800 RIFLES, SOME MORTARS, SUBMACHINE GUNS AND AN ASSORTMENT OF OTHER ARMS, ALONG WITH ONE AND ONE-HALF TONS OF AMMUNITION FROM A PORTUGUESE ARMY BASE IN THE LUANDA AREA. THE SAME DAY THE TRANSFER WAS MADE, A PERSON IDENTIFYING HIMSELF ONLY AS A REPRESENTATIVE OF THE MPLA APPEARED IN CARDOSO'S OUTER OFFICE AND GAVE AN AIDE AN ENVELOPE FOR THE GENERAL. CARDOSO FOUND INSIDE THE ENVELOPE A HANDWRITTEN LIST OF ALL THE WEAPONS THAT HAD JUST BEEN DELIVERED TO UNITA. HE SHOWED ME THE LIST; THE AMOUNTS WERE OFF BY A BIT, BUT IT WAS OBVIOUS THE MPLA KNEW EXACTLY WHAT WAS GOING ON AND WAS WARNING CARDOSO.

4. AS A RESULT OF THAT INCIDENT CARDOSO HAS TAKEN NO FURTHER MEASURES. HE BELIEVES THAT ONLY UNITA CAN PREVENT AN MPLA TAKEOVER; WITHOUT ADEQUATE WEAPONS SAVIMBI IS LOST. CARDOSO DOES NOT BELIEVE THAT FNLA CAN DO MUCH BECAUSE IT LACKS CAPABLE LEADERS. SECRETARY OF INFORMATION HENDRICK VAAL NETO IS A KILLER, MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE MAETUS NETO IS LESS THAN A ZERO AND MINISTER OF HEALTH ABRIGADA IS A CROOK. FNLA MILITARY COMMANDERS ARE INCOMPETENT AND THEIR REPRESENTATIVE ON THE MIXED MILITARY COMMISSION, BARREIRO, IS USELESS. SAVIMBI HAS 30,000 TO 40,000 MEN IN TRAINING, SAID THE HIGH COMMISSIONER, AND ONCE THEY GET GUNS WILL BE A FORCE TO BE RECKONED WITH. MPLA NOW HAS BETWEEN 20,000 AND 30,000 TROOPS, ALL WELL ARMED. TIME IS RUNNING OUT AND SOMETHING MUST BE DONE SOON.

5. WEAPONS ARE AVAILABLE IN LARGE NUMBERS, SAID CARDOSO. THE PORTUGUESE HAVE 40,000 EXCESS RIFLES IN ANGOLA. BUT THE HIGH COMMISSIONER IS HAMSTRUNG BECAUSE MPLA ACTIVIST SYMPATHIZERS AND INFORMANTS ARE EVERYWHERE IN THE GOVERNMENT AND HE CANNOT MAKE A MOVE THAT WILL NOT JEOPARDIZE HIS POSITION AND EMBARRASS THE PORTUGUESE GOVERNMENT. OF THE NINE REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ARMED FORCES MOVEMENT WHO OCCUPY OFFICES IN HIS SUITE, THREE ARE DEFINITELY UNTRUSTWORTHY.

6. CARDOSO HAS BEEN USING FORMER PORTUGUESE DEFENSE MINISTER  
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FIRMINIO MIGUEL AS A COURIER TO LISBON, BUT MPLA IS ON TO HIM AND THE GENERAL PLANS TO SEND BRIGADIER GENERAL VALENTE, COMMANDER OF THE PORTUGUESE AIR FORCE IN ANGOLA, TO LISBON SHORTLY TO SEE IF HE CAN MAKE NEW ARRANGEMENTS. THE ONLY FEASIBLE METHOD IS TO BRING THE ARMS IN BY SEA. CARDOSO ALSO HOPES TO SEND SAVIMBI TO LISBON TO ENTER INTO DIRECT TALKS WITH THE AUTHORITIES THERE AND TO GET TELEVISION EXPOSURE DESIGNED TO WIN HIM SYMPATHY AMONG THE PORTUGUESE

PEOPLE.

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S E C R E T SECTION 2 OF 2 LUANDA 0837

EXDIS

7. I ASKED ABOUT MPLA ARMAMENTS. CARDOSO SAID THE MPLA NOW HAS THIRTY-NINE 122MM RECOILLESS RIFLES. THE MUCH DISCUSSED ARMORED PERSONNEL CARRIERS REPRESENT NO THREAT, HE SAID, AS THEY ARE LITTLE MORE THAN TRUCKS WITH ARMOR PLATE ON THE SIDES AND CAN EASILY BE TAKEN OUT BY A GRENADE OR A BAZOOKA ROUND FROM THE FRONT. MPLA HAS TWO SHIPS SUPPLYING ITS NEEDS FROM CONGO BRAZZAVILLE - THE "MAIOMBE" MENTIONED TO ME BY REAR ADMIRAL CARDOSO, AND THE "DINGE" ANOTHER CONVERTED LANDING CRAFT. THE SPLIT BETWEEN RADICALS AND MODERATES IN THE MPLA CONTINUES, BUT THE RADICALS HAVE THE EDGE. CARDOSO BELIEVES THAT COMMANDERS VALODIA AND GINGA WERE KILLED BY MPLA RADICALS AND PE IMMORTAL MONSTER, ANOTHER MODERATE IN THE ORGANIZATION IS TABBED FOR ASSASSINATION BY THE RADICALS, WHO INCLUDE NITO ALVES, COMMANDER OF THE FIRST MILITARY REGION. AGOSTINHO NETO IS GIVING THE ORDERS AND THERE IS LITTLE DANGER AT THIS TIME OF HIS REMOVAL TO AN HONORIFIC STATUS. THOSE BLACKS DEMOBILIZED AND THE PORTUGUESE WHO JOIN LIBERATION GROUPS TEND TO PREFER MPLA AND THEIR PRESENCE GIVESTHE MPLA AN EDGE IN COMBAT SITUATIONS. FNLA ELEMENTS IN ANGOLA WERE FORMERLY COMMANDED BY ZAIRIAN OFFICERS, WHO HAVE NOW BEEN REMOVED BY MOBUTU AT THE INSTANCE OF PRESIDENTS KAUNDA AND NYRERE. THE CONSEQUENCES FOR FNLA HAVE BEEN DISASTROUS.

8. CARDOSO THEN GAVE ME A CONGERIES OF INTELLIGENCE GLEANINGS: MOBUTU AND SAVIMBI ARE ON QUITE GOOD TERMS AT THIS TIME. A FRENCH MERCENARY WITH EXPERIENCE IN BIAFRA HAS

ARRIVED IN ANGOLA TO WORK FOR UNITA. ONE PROSPECTIVE SOURCE

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OF MANPOWER FOR UNITA ARE THE 1,000 EX-COMMANDOS AND 500 FORMER  
PARATROOPERS STILL LIVING IN ANGOLA. CARDOSO HAS WORD THEY ARE  
BEING APPROACHED. SIX OR SEVEN COMMUNIST PARTY ACTIVISTS, ONE  
OF THEM A MEMBER OF THE FRENCH COMMUNIST PARTY HAVE COME TO HELP  
MPLA. HE HAS HEARD THAT THE FRENCH ARE DEFINITELY PLANNING TO  
PROVIDE MONEY AND/OR ARMS TO SAVIMBI.

KILLORAN

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## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** Z  
**Capture Date:** 01 JAN 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** POLITICAL SETTLEMENT, LIBERATION FRONTS, MILITARY AGREEMENTS, ARMS SHIPMENTS  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 30 JUN 1975  
**Decaption Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
**Decaption Note:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Authority:** CunninFX  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
**Disposition Remarks:**  
**Document Number:** 1975LUANDA00837  
**Document Source:** CORE  
**Document Unique ID:** 00  
**Drafter:** n/a  
**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** X2  
**Errors:** N/A  
**Film Number:** D750226-0475  
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**Office:** ACTION SS  
**Original Classification:** SECRET  
**Original Handling Restrictions:** EXDIS  
**Original Previous Classification:** n/a  
**Original Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Page Count:** 4  
**Previous Channel Indicators:** n/a  
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**Previous Handling Restrictions:** EXDIS  
**Reference:** n/a  
**Review Action:** RELEASED, APPROVED  
**Review Authority:** CunninFX  
**Review Comment:** n/a  
**Review Content Flags:**  
**Review Date:** 10 JUN 2003  
**Review Event:**  
**Review Exemptions:** n/a  
**Review History:** RELEASED <10 JUN 2003 by BoyleJA>; APPROVED <09 DEC 2003 by CunninFX>  
**Review Markings:**

Margaret P. Grafeld  
Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
06 JUL 2006

**Review Media Identifier:**  
**Review Referrals:** n/a  
**Review Release Date:** n/a  
**Review Release Event:** n/a  
**Review Transfer Date:**  
**Review Withdrawn Fields:** n/a  
**Secure:** OPEN  
**Status:** NATIVE  
**Subject:** HIGH COMMISSIONER SUPPLIES ARMS TO UNITA  
**TAGS:** PINT, MILI, AO, MPLA, FNLA, UNITA, (CARDOSO, ANTONIO DA SILVA)  
**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
**Markings:** Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006